

**GRESHAM REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
APRIL 14, 2010 MEETING MINUTES**

MEETING LOCATION

Gresham City Hall, Conference Room 3A  
1333 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham, OR

COMMITTEE PRESENT: Richard Anderson Cathy Olsen-Dennis  
John Bildsoe Lori Stegmann, Vice Chair  
Jean DeMaster, Chair Roseanne Zales  
Mike Miller

COMMITTEE ABSENT: Sanford Jones

COMMISSION  
LIAISON PRESENT: Josh Fuhrer

STAFF PRESENT: Michael Parkhurst, Senior City Planner  
Michelle Kimble, City Planner  
Emily Randel, Economic Development Specialist  
Cecille Turley, Recording Secretary

GUESTS PRESENT: Leslie Garth, East Multnomah County Transportation Coordinator for Ride Connection and participant on Rockwood MAX Art Committee  
Dr. John Kilian, participant on Plaza del Sol Programming Work Group and representative on various City of Gresham committees

Chair DeMaster called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and asked committee members and guests to introduce themselves for the benefit of everyone in attendance.

## **1. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Bildsoe announced that the East County Courts meeting will be held on Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at the Multnomah County building at 501 SE Hawthorne. He encouraged everyone to come and get the word out to family and friends.

Commissioner Fuhrer also encouraged people to attend the East County Courts meeting. He said the more bodies, the better. We need as much support as possible.

Mr. Parkhurst noted the vacant seats on the committee. He said Leslie Garth, East Multnomah County Transportation Coordinator with Ride Connection was invited to attend this meeting. She has been involved with the City in a variety of ways, including through her service on the Rockwood MAX Art Committee. She is eligible to fill the Member at Large seat. In addition, there is a vacant seat for a representative from the Public Safety Committee. Dr. Kilian currently serves on that committee and may be a good candidate.

## 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No one wished to address the Committee.

### **3. MEETING MINUTES: JANUARY 13 AND FEBRUARY 10, 2010**

Motion was made by Richard Anderson and seconded by Lori Stegmann **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 13 AND FEBRUARY 10, 2010.** The motion passed as follows:

ANDERSON	YES	MILLER	YES
BILDSOE	YES	OLSEN-DENNIS	YES
DEMASTER	YES	STEGMANN	YES
JONES	ABSENT	ZALES	YES

### **4. PLAZA DEL SOL REPORT**

#### **INTERIM USES PHASE 2 UPDATE**

Ms. Kimble gave an update on the second phase of the interim improvements at Plaza del Sol. (PowerPoint presentation attached as Exhibit A.)

#### **Comments / Questions**

##### **Will the play area be accessible by wheelchair and will it have a base of bark dust? (Dr. Kilian)**

- Ms. Kimble said wheelchair ramps will be added to the current gravel pathway and engineered bark mulch will be used in the play area.
- Dr. Kilian voiced concern that once a wheelchair gets onto the bark dust, it will be stuck.
- Ms. Kimble said that the company the ramps are being purchased from told her that it will be Americans with Disabilities Act accessible.

##### **Will there be lighting at night? (Chair DeMaster)**

- Ms. Kimble said yes, although some of the power sources will be cut off due to the 187<sup>th</sup>/188<sup>th</sup> realignment and will be dealt with through the realignment process.

##### **Where will be restrooms be located? (Chair DeMaster)**

- Ms. Kimble said staff is treating the site as a neighborhood park, which do not have restrooms. Events organizers will need to bring in their own restroom facilities.
- Chair DeMaster said it is unfortunate that the restroom issue is not being addressed. The hope is for a number of people to use the basketball court and play area. No restrooms on site means there will be pressure on the surrounding businesses that do have restrooms.
- Ms. Olsen-Dennis asked Chair DeMaster if she would suggest a port-o-potty.
- Chair DeMaster said yes.
- Ms. Kimble replied that she does not believe that port-o-potties are a good idea for the site.
- Ms. Zales agreed. She said they will be knocked over.
- Commissioner Fuhrer noted that the cost for even a semi-permanent restroom facility is between \$150,000 and \$200,000.

#### **PROGRAMMING WORK GROUP REPORT**

Ms. Stegmann, co-chair of the programming work group gave an update on the work group's activities planning for the Cinco de Mayo event set for May 5 from 3:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Plaza del Sol. She said event set-up will begin at 1:00 p.m. She talked about the performers and vendors who will participate and whom they are still trying to get to participate. She said 5,000 to 6,000 fliers are being produced

and will be distributed to the community. If anyone would like some fliers to distribute, let her know. She acknowledged all those who contributed their time, money, and in-kind donations. People are asking her if this will be an annual event. She said what we might want to do is roll the profit over for next year's event if there is one or give it to a non-profit. Maybe the Rockwood Business Coalition (RBC) could manage it next year as a profit center. It might help fund that organization, which is in dire need of funds. We might qualify for a grant through Oregon Cultural Trust so that maybe next year there could be \$2,000 to \$3,000 in the coffers to do something even bigger and better.

### **Comments / Questions**

Dr. Kilian said Ms. Stegmann deserves kudos for her very hard work in planning for this event. The budget has doubled from \$1,000 to \$2,000. She has done a great job.

Chair DeMaster said Ms. Stegmann is making this event happen.

Ms. Stegmann said she appreciates all the help she has received and thanked Dr. Kilian for his efforts.

Chair DeMaster said volunteers are needed for the event. If anyone would like to volunteer or know of others who would, please let the work group know. Once the event closes, people will be referred to the surrounding businesses that will stay open.

### **5. ROCKWOOD IN MOTION PROJECT UPDATE: STREET DESIGN, MAX STATION ART, AND PUBLIC OUTREACH PLAN**

Mr. Parkhurst presented the staff report. (PowerPoint presentation attached as Exhibit B.) He said staff is looking for feedback on the design elements and public outreach plan.

### **Comments / Questions**

The Committee's general comments on the design elements were all very positive. Questions and specific comments are as follows:

**Word needs to get out to the community that Rockwood in Motion is a complete makeover and a message from the City is that it cares about Rockwood, which will hopefully change the perception.** *(Ms. Stegmann)*

- Chair DeMaster suggested handing out copies of this PowerPoint presentation at the Cinco de Mayo event.
- Mr. Parkhurst said it is a great opportunity, but staff first needs to discuss what it would do for outreach.

**There is color variation on the spires on the art towers for the new MAX station. Will just the tips be lit?** *(Ms. Olsen-Dennis)*

- Mr. Parkhurst explained that all but the tips will be painted, but lighting will shine up onto the spires at night.

**Will the art towers for the new MAX station be stable against the east winds?** *(Ms. Zales)*

- Mr. Parkhurst said there are specific standards that must be met. The artist is working with the engineer on that issue.

**What happens with the old 188<sup>th</sup> after the street is realigned?** *(Mr. Bildsoe)*

- Mr. Parkhurst said it will be closed. There will probably be some landscaping, and the curb will be finished out so it no longer looks like a road. Access via a driveway to Mr. Hopkins' property to the east will remain.

**Were the landscaping choices based on irrigation or hardiness to withstand the winter months? The selections for the Powell Boulevard seem much hardier.** *(Ms. Olsen-Dennis)*

- Ms. Zales suggested using dwarf conifers and color spots as she did at her salon.
- Mr. Parkhurst said the City has learned a lot about landscaping since Stark Street Phase I and Powell Boulevard is a reflection of lessons learned.
- Chair DeMaster said she believes Powell Boulevard is on its second planting.
- Mr. Anderson said that there needs to be money to maintain whatever is planted so it will not die after a couple of years.

**Transportation staff has a tendency to place lots of signage and it can be sign after sign, which is jarring. Use one sign instead of three. If it must be three signs at every crosswalk, then maybe take some of the crosswalks out.** *(Mr. Anderson)*

**It is not in the budget so she hopes a way can be found to deal with the ugly color of the signal mast at the Burnside/Stark intersection.** *(Ms. Stegmann)*

- Ms. Olsen-Dennis suggested painting it the same color as the spires on the art towers for the new MAX station.
- Commissioner Fuhrer noted that on Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, the housing for the crosswalk mechanism is painted the same color as all the flags and banners up and down the street. That level of detail needs to be considered in terms of all three of the street corners coming together along with the tip of the Triangle. What is the thematic unity of the Rockwood Town Center and what ties it all together?

**Pavers are a headache to maintain. She constantly deals with moss and weeds coming up through the cracks because of all the rain, and they have a tendency to sink.** *(Ms. Zales)*

- Mr. Anderson suggested using stamped concrete or asphalt because pavers rise up and people trip over them.
- Mr. Bildsoe said he likes the look, but if there is heavy traffic and ice, it can damage street pavers.
- Chair DeMaster said sidewalk pavers should be okay.

**Make the tip of the Triangle design stable, sturdy, yet subdued and not so outstanding that people crash looking at it.** *(Mr. Bildsoe)*

- Mr. Parkhurst said the design is for a mini plaza. There will be crosswalks heading east across Burnside and south across Stark, and there is a cluster of utility poles on the edge. Pedestrians will pass through the space, but no one will hang out in the space.
- Mr. Anderson suggested a low-height water feature for the space.

**How is Beech Street downtown holding up considering that similar treatments will be used for Rockwood in Motion?** *(Dr. Kilian)*

- Commissioner Fuhrer commented that due to the way it was engineered, the grade is such that cars bottom out. People only drive that street once.
- Mr. Parkhurst said the engineers acknowledged the issues with the design of that street and have learned what not to do again.

**There is an emotional connection to artwork. The Portland Building is such an icon in the middle of Portland. The signature art elements for the MAX station, and the five pillars that will go into the plaza that has not been mentioned, could be a magnet for the art community.**

**Several things are starting to snowball and it will magnify. (Dr. Kilian)**

- Mr. Bildsoe said the East County Courts project has an art component.
- Commissioner Fuhrer said a 30-foot-high Douglas fir tree trunk concept was the second choice of the Rockwood MAX Art Committee. If the courts project is going to have a public art component, maybe offer up the tree design and get another iconic art element for the area.
- Chair DeMaster suggested echoing the design of the art towers for the new MAX station in the design for the tip of the Triangle.
- Commissioner Fuhrer suggested using the Plaza del Sol mural design as an icon for the Rockwood Town Center on banners, street furniture, etc. that marks street names similar to what used to be done, and echo that design on the tip of the Triangle.

**Create the design and purchase the special materials now for the fourth corner that will not be built until later so everything will match. (Mr. Anderson)**

- Mr. Parkhurst said that is what staff intends to do. The design for the northwest corner of Stark and 187<sup>th</sup> will be mirrored across the street.

**Will the school buses still be able to turn left onto 188<sup>th</sup> from Burnside? (Chair DeMaster)**

- Mr. Parkhurst said yes.

## **6. SMALL BUSINESS INCENTIVE PROGRAM**

Mr. Parkhurst presented the staff report on the proposed Small Business Incentive Program. (PowerPoint presentation attached as Exhibit C.)

### **Comments / Questions**

**What is the criterion for “locally owned?” (Mr. Anderson)**

- Mr. Parkhurst said the applicant must live in Gresham.

**Will there be outreach so people know about the program? (Chair DeMaster)**

- Mr. Parkhurst said yes, through both the Community Development Department who will run the program and through Urban Renewal staff.
- Mr. Miller suggested sending the flier to every eligible business since there are not that many.
- Mr. Anderson suggested sending the flier to land lords of vacant spaces, including commercial buildings.
- Mr. Parkhurst said the commercial broker community is in tune with this program. It was in today's Outlook so it is getting publicity.
- Mr. Bildsoe asked if the big brokers like Norris, Beggs & Simpson are in the loop.
- Ms. Randel said not yet, but they can be and should be. Economic Development Services staff reaches out to them when it has a request for space and they are on an email distribution list.
- Chair DeMaster noted that Mount Hood Community College has a Small Business Administration group and Mercy Corps provides enterprise loans. Are those groups in the loop?
- Ms. Randel said yes.

## **7. GRANT PROGRAM ANNUAL REVIEW**

Mr. Parkhurst introduced the presentation. He explained that the annual review typically comes with proposed changes to the program. Staff is not quite ready to present the proposed changes, but might be in May. Emily Randel is running the New Industries and Predevelopment Services grant programs. She will present that portion of the review and he will present the Apartment Rehabilitation and Storefront Improvement portion.

Mr. Parkhurst and Ms. Randel presented the staff report. (PowerPoint presentation attached as Exhibit D.)

### **Comments / Questions**

**Is there competition with other cities in offering the New Industries and Predevelopment Services grant programs?** *(Ms. Stegmann)*

- Ms. Randel said there is competition so it is very powerful and impactful to have something to offer.

**Does the Apartment Rehabilitation Grant Program coordinate with the Rental Housing Inspection Program so that the grant is contingent upon the applicant property passing a housing inspection?** *(Mr. Anderson)*

- Mr. Parkhurst said there is a check to see if the applicant owes the City money or has any violations before the grant is paid, but a housing inspection is not done. Our programs run parallel, but Urban Renewal staff talks frequently with the inspection staff and has a similar relationship with Code Compliance where we are working more closely with them to identify problem properties and work with the property owners.

**After she received her Storefront Improvement grant, she removed the bars from the sides of her building so people do not see the bars as they drive down 181<sup>st</sup>.** *(Ms. Zales)*

**Has the idea of scaling or requiring a minimum amount of investment been considered for the Storefront Improvement Grant Program?** *(Mr. Miller)*

- Mr. Parkhurst said there is a minimum threshold, but it does not scale.

**Putting investment into structures that are undesirable for a variety of reasons, including location is an issue to consider.** *(Ms. Kimble)*

- Mr. Parkhurst commented that currently, there is no incentive to assist commercial redevelopment and reconstruction, which is unfortunate.
- Commissioner Fuhrer explained that the tax increment is not there yet to try to do incentives for new developments. As we get closer to being able to bring permanent development to the Catalyst Site, some of those programs will have to be developed.

**Some building might need to be targeted for a grant because once the Catalyst Site or just the transportation infrastructure is in place those buildings need to be improved. At present, we are waiting for them to ask for a grant.** *(Chair DeMaster)*

- Ms. Zales said when she put up her sign thanking Urban Renewal for her grant, people called her asking about it. They were truly interested.
- Chair DeMaster said the need to promote the Catalyst Site has always been an issue with this committee. There is signage now, although it is small.

**There are many properties that just need things like a coat of paint. Could those properties be approached? It would make the whole neighborhood look better. (Mr. Bildsoe)**

- Mr. Anderson said the Rental Housing Inspection Program might be able to help in that area.

**Are there crime statistics on the apartments that have received grants? (Ms. Stegmann)**

- Mr. Parkhurst explained that the closer one works with the police statistics, the more complicated it gets. In addition, with very small numbers, a small flare-up of five can appear as a 50 percent increase.
- Ms. Stegmann suggested comparing the general crime statistics from before the Rockwood in Motion projects to a couple of years after Rockwood in Motion. She feels that having the art tower, more eyes on Plaza del Sol, and more people personally invested in the community will reduce crime and she would be excited to see those statistics.
- Mr. Anderson said that improvements might cause the statistics to go up because the people who were there before the improvements might not report the crime, but the new folks likely will report it.
- Mr. Bildsoe said there are other correlations, as well. The management companies attract either the wrong kinds of people or the right kinds of people.
- Ms. Zales commented that an apartment complex south of Stark was recently fixed up and since then it has been tagged many times and the paint that was used to cover the graffiti does not match, which is sad. She does not know how that problem can be solved.
- Mr. Anderson said if a grant for paint is given then make sure a standard color is used so it is easy to match.

## **8. GOOD OF THE ORDER**

None.

## **B. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

Hearing no further business, Chair DeMaster adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.